

Caudals (5 to 13) Unpaired
 Caudals (14 to 27) Paired
 Caudals (28 to 29) Unpaired
 Caudals (30 to 40) Paired
 Caudal (Terminal) Unpaired.
 Subsequently, I captured two more snakes from the

same locality but both had the usual paired caudal scales, except the terminal one.

June 11, 1994

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25. THROAT COLORATION IN FEMALE *MICROHYLA ORNATA* (DUM. & BIBR.)

Microhyla ornata (Dum. & Bibr.) is a small microhylid. In Rajasthan, this species is confined to the southern Aravallis (McCann 1943, Mansukhani and Murthy 1964, Sharma, in press).

Daniel (1963) and Mansukhani and Murthy (1964) have described the coloration of this species. According to them, the colour of the ventrum of this species is white, although throat and chest may be stippled with brown. During the breeding period (i.e. rainy season) the throat of males appear black. In July, 1993, I collected many

gravid females from various localities in Udaipur district. The throats of all the females were black similar to the males. I have seen the same coloration during the winter. Hence differentiation of sexes on the basis of throat coloration is not possible.

June 11, 1994

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 SHARMA, S.K. (In Press): Presence of *Microhyla ornata* (Dum. & Bibr.) in Udaipur district (Raj).

26. ADDITIONS TO THE LEPIDOCEPHALID FISHES OF BIHAR, INDIA

INTRODUCTION

During the course of studies on the hill-stream fishes along the Nepal-Bihar border, three specimens of Lepidocephalids were collected from the river Pandai of Bihar, which, on examination, were identified as *Lepidocephalus annandalei* (Chaudhuri), *L. guntea* (Hamilton) and *L. thermalis* (Valenciennes). The river Pandai rises in Sumeswar range of Nepal territory and enters the district of West Champaran through a pass between the Sumeswar range and Churiaghat at Bhikhanathori. It is joined by several rivulets arising from the Someswar range and ultimately drains into the Ganges river system. A perusal of existing Indian literature on the ichthyofauna including Das (1939), Menon (1950), Hora (1953), Jhingran (1956) and Venkateshwarlu (1977) reveals that two of the loaches, *Lepidocephalus annandalei* (Chaudhuri) and *L. thermalis* (Valenciennes) were not previously recorded from Bihar, and are, therefore, additions to the ichthyofauna of Bihar.

DESCRIPTIONS

Lepidocephalus annandalei (Choudhuri)

Local name: Nakati; **English name:** Annandale loach.

Material examined: 1 ex., 47 mm TL, Bhikhanathri, Pandai river, Bihar, S.K. Mishra : 6 April 1978.

Diagnostic features: D ii 7; P 8; V 7; A ii5; C 16.

Length of head 6, depth of body 5.9, both in total length. Eye diameter 4 in length of head, equal to interorbital width; predorsal length 2.5 in total length.

Barbels 2 pairs, maxillary and rostral pairs of barbels small.

Dorsal fin origin between eye and base of caudal fin. Caudal fin slightly emarginate; ventral fins nearly opposite to dorsal fin; scales indistinct.

Colour in life; Body dirty yellowish; a black band extending mid-laterally from posterior margin of head to base of caudal fin; head with numerous black spots; dorsal fin with three black spots, anal with two and caudal fin with two dark spots encircled in white rings.

Distribution: Northern India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The present record is a noteworthy addition to the fish fauna of Bihar.

Lepidocephalus thermalis (Valenciennes)

Local name: Nakati; **English name:** Burmese loach.

Material examined: 1 ex., 36 mm TL, Bhikhanathori, Pandai river, Bihar, S.K. Mishra, 6 April 1978.

Diagnostic features: D ii 6; P i 6; V7; A ii 5; C 16.

Length of head 5.5, depth of body 9, both in total length. Eye diameter 3.1 in length of head, entirely in anterior half of head.

Barbels 4 pairs, rostral, inter-maxillary, maxillary and mental pairs.

Dorsal fin origin opposite to ventral fins, caudal fin slightly emerginate. Scales un conspicuous, about 30 rows between the anal fin abse and back. Lateral line absent.

Colour in life: Body yellow with iridiocytes on head, blotches on back and on lateral line; base of upper half of caudal fin with a black spot; a dark streak extending from eye to end of snout; dorsal fin with black spots, and four bands on caudal fin.

Distribution: India, coastal districts of Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra, and Sri Lanka. The present record is an addition to the ichthyofauna of Bihar.

KEY TO SPECIES *Lepidocephalus*

1. (a) Caudal fin with two dark spots encircled in white rings *L. amandalei* (Chaudhuri)
- (b) Caudal fin with one or numerous spots but not encircled in white rings.....2
2. (a) Length of head 6.5-6.7, depth of body 5.7-6.5 in total length *L. guntea* (Hamilton)
- (b) Length of head 5.5-6.0, depth of body 8.1-9.7 in total length *L. thermalis* (Valenciennes)

DISCUSSION

These loaches are bottom dwellers, found in swift streams, rivers and lakes of hilly areas and are able to burrow and quickly disappear, if alarmed. The spinous first pectoral ray helps in "digging in".

They are of little interest in fisheries but *Lepidocephalus thermalis* (Valenciennes) is valued as an aquarium fish. They are small but nourishing fish, eaten locally as they are not suitable for transport in fresh state, nor sufficiently common at any one place for large scale processing.

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27. ON *PUNTIUS SETNAI* CHHAPGAR AND SANE: NEW REPORT AND COMMENTS

(With a text-figure)

A barb, identical in description with *Puntius setnai*, described by Chhappgar and Sane (1992), has recently been collected from South Kannara (Hoshangadi, S. Kannara, Karnatak State, date of collection 2/9/1991, collected by S. Kamble, WRS, ZSI, Pune, reg. no. V/1516). According to the collector, the fish is very common in the shallow streams of the area.

A line drawing showing salient taxonomic features of the fish is presented here (Fig. 1).

Comments: This barb was first identified as *Puntius nigrofasciatus* on the basis of a few specimens collected by ZSI personnel from a rivulet in the forested area of Ponda, Goa (Yazdani 1977). The fish was described to possess three vertical bands on the body, serrations on the last undivided dorsal ray and complete lateral line with 20-22 scales. Barbels were found to

be absent. Fin-ray counts and other details of the specimens were not given (Yazdani 1977). Later, Chhappgar and Sane (1980) pointed out that the fish described by Yazdani (1977) is *Puntius narayani*. This statement was based on the observations carried out on the ZSI specimens mentioned above (fishes from a rivulet in Ponda, Goa, date of collection 13/12/73, name of the collector B.S. Lamba, determined as *P. nigrofasciatus* by G.M. Yazdani). Obviously these authors had overlooked the serrated nature of the dorsal spine.

While examining recent collections from S. Kannara, we came across these 3-banded barbels again. We found that the specimens are exactly like the ones collected from Ponda, Goa in 1973. The fish could not be easily placed anywhere in the latest key and